

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. An e-mail client, comprising:
2 message composition logic operable to compose a message to at least one
3 recipient;
4 write protect logic operable to protect the message against subsequent
5 alteration by said at least one recipient.

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1 2. The client of claim 1, wherein the write protect logic comprises
2 conversion logic operable to change the file from a text file to a picture file.

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1 3. The client of claim 2, wherein the picture file is included as an inline
2 image within the message.

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1 4. The client of claim 2, wherein the picture file is stored on a central server
2 for retrieval by the recipient.

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1 5. The client of claim 2, wherein the picture file is included as an attachment
2 to the message.

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1 6. The client of claim 2, wherein the picture file is a joint photographic
2 experts group (JPEG) file.

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1 7. The client of claim 2, wherein the picture file is a graphics image format
2 (GIF) file.

1 8. The client of claim 1, wherein the write protect logic comprises
2 conversion logic operable to change the file from a text file to a portable document
3 format (PDF) file.

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1 9. The client of claim 1, wherein the composition logic is operable to allow
2 the user to compose a new message, a reply to a received message or forward a received
3 message.

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1 10. The client of claim 1, wherein the client further comprises a user interface
2 operable to allow the user to select a plurality of options, including enabling the write
3 protect logic.

1 11. A method of protecting e-mail, the method comprising the steps of:
2 enabling a user to draft a message; and
3 converting the message into a write-protected format such that recipients
4 are inhibited from altering the content.

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1 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the write-protected format comprises a
2 portable document format (PDF) file.

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1 13. The method of claim 11, wherein the write-protected format comprises a
2 graphics image format (GIF) file.

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1 14. The method of claim 11, wherein the write-protected format comprises a
2 joint photographic experts group (JPEG) file.

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1 15. The method of claim 11, the method further comprising:
2 enabling the user to choose whether to protect the message or not;
3 wherein converting the message into a write-protected format is performed
4 responsive to user choice.

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1 16. The method of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises sending
2 the message to at least one recipient in the write-protected format.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the message is stored on a central server
2 for viewing by the user.

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1 18. The method of claim 16, wherein the message is downloaded to a
2 computer for viewing by the user.

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1 19. The method of claim 16, wherein the message is included as an inline
2 image file.

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1 20. The method of claim 16, wherein the message is included as an
2 attachment.

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